II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition for stimulating nitric oxide production in mammalian cells, said composition comprising an effective amount of a water soluble extract of *Salix alba*; and

said extract contains water soluble component having a molecular weight of 192.15 Daltons.

2. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1 wherein said extract has the ability to stimulate nitric oxide release in the range of 15 nM to 100 nM in pedal ganglia cells.

3. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1 wherein said extract has the ability to stimulate nitric oxide release in the range of 50 nM to 100 nM in endothelial cells.

4. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 2 wherein said extract contains water soluble components having molecular weights in the range of about 50 to about 5000 Daltons.

5. (Original) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 3 wherein said extract contains water soluble components having molecular weights in the range of about 50 to about 500 Daltons.

6. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 4, additionally characterized as exhibiting a single major peak on high performance liquid chromatographic analysis in 10 nM sodium chloride, 0.5 mM EDTA, 100 mM sodium acetate and 50% acetonitrile, pH 5.0.

7. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 5, additionally characterized as exhibiting a single major peak on high performance liquid chromatographic analysis in 10 nM sodium chloride, 0.5 mM EDTA, 100 mM sodium acetate and 50% acetonitrile, pH 5.0.

8. – 14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently Amended) A pharmaceutical composition for treating bacterial infections, viral infections, asthma, and/or inflammation in a mammal, said composition comprising an effective amount of an extract of a plant in a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle, said plant being *Salix alba*, prepared by a process comprising:

(a) homogenizing the plant parts;

(b) preparing an extract from said plant parts, wherein said extract contains a water soluble component having a molecular weight of 192.15 Daltons, and wherein said extract stimulates nitric oxide production in mammalian cells; and

(c) substantially removing components from said extract of molecular weight greater than about 5000 Daltons.

16. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 15, wherein the plant parts include leaves, flowers, bark or rhizomes.

17. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 15 further comprising at least one water soluble component selected from a group consisting of: a water soluble component have a molecular weight of 353.28 Daltons, a water soluble component have a molecular weight of 109.09 Daltons, and a water soluble component have a molecular weight of 97.1 Daltons.

18. (Previously Presented) A pharmaceutical composition according to claim 1 further comprising at least one water soluble component selected from a group consisting of: a water soluble component have a molecular weight of 353.28

Daltons, a water soluble component have a molecular weight of 109.09 Daltons, and a water soluble component have a molecular weight of 97.1 Daltons.